

Remarks

The April 19, 2005 Office Action noted an informality with respect to the February 28, 2005 Supplemental IDS, and raised several rejections. In view of the enclosed copy of the German reference DE 941 153, the above amendment, and the remarks below, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants submit herewith a copy of German reference DE 941 153. We do not have a translation of this reference, but noted it for its drawings which appear self explanatory.

To the extent that any additional fees are needed for consideration thereof, please charge them to deposit account 17-0055. In any event, it should be noted that the drawings of DE 941 153 have much in common with U.S. patent 5,560,070, which has already been considered.

Previously Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicated that claims 24-27 were allowed, and that claims 13, 17, 18 and 30-32 contained allowable subject matter (if rewritten in independent form). Claims 24-27 have not been further amended, and claims 13, 17, 30 and 31 have been rewritten in independent form and claim 32 has been made dependent on claim 31 (thereby rendering claims 13, 17, 30 and 31, as well as claims 18 and 32 dependent thereon, allowable). Also, claims 14, 28, 29 and 33-36 have been made dependent on claims indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

Thus, claims 13, 14, 17, 18 and 24-36 are in allowable form.

Art Rejections

Claim 2 (and thus claims 3-5, 7-12, 15-16, 19-21 and 45-47) have now been amended to recite that at least two of the layers are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself along a fold line and that the fold line is located at the opposed end of the stack which is opposite the first end of the stack that is held together by the brush head. This amendment has a basis in Figures 13 and 16 which show the fold lines located at the end of the stack which is opposite the first end of the stack that is held together by the brush head. In other matters, it should be noted that conforming changes have been made to claims 3 and 9.

Claim 44 has been rewritten in independent form to include some of the limitations of previous claim 2 (i.e., the limitations in former claim 2 with respect to the two of the layers being formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself are not in amended claim 44) and to recite that closed ends of the loops are opposite the first end of the stack that is held together by the brush head (see Figs. 11, 13, and 16).

Regarding the amendments to claim 2 and 44, positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment ("first") end of the brush head provides the brush head with extra strength at the scrubbing end.

U.S. Patent No. 2,514,496 (Jones) was cited in the Office Action as showing at least two of the layers that are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself, wherein the brush head is configured such that a first end of the stack is held together by the brush head and an opposed end of the stack can spread out between at least some of the layers of the stack. However,

looking at Jones, it is apparent that Jones does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. Thus, amended claims 2 and 44 recite a feature that is not in the Jones brush head and provides advantages over the Jones brush head.

U.S. Patent No. 2,428,306 (Beagle) was also cited in the Office Action as showing at least two of the layers that are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself, wherein the brush head is configured such that a first end of the stack is held together by the brush head and an opposed end of the stack can spread out between at least some of the layers of the stack. However, Beagle does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. For instance, column 2, lines 28-34 of Beagle describe a fold line at the shank (attachment) portion of the brush head. Thus, amended claims 2 and 44 recite a feature that is not in the Beagle brush head and provides advantages over the Beagle brush head.

U.S. Patent No. 2,813,286 (Strader) was cited in the Office Action as showing at least two of the layers that are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself, wherein the brush head is configured such that a first end of the stack is held together by the brush head and an opposed end of the stack can spread out between at least some of the layers of the stack. However, looking at Strader, it is apparent that Strader does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. Thus, amended claims 2 and 44 recite a feature that is not in the Strader brush head and provides advantages over the Strader brush head.

U.S. Patent No. 6,745,427 (Trenz) was cited in the Office Action as showing at least two of the layers that are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself, wherein the brush head is configured such that a first end of the stack is held together by the brush head and an opposed end of the stack can spread out between at least some of the layers of the stack. Trenz does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. Thus, amended claims 2 and 44 recite a feature that is not in the Trenz brush head and provides advantages over the Trenz brush head.

U.S. Patent No. 2,666,223 (Farrell) was also cited in the Office Action as showing at least two of the layers that are formed from a sheet of the water-degradable material that has been folded back upon itself, wherein the brush head is configured such that a first end of the stack is held together by the brush head and an opposed end of the stack can spread out between at least some of the layers of the stack. However, looking at Farrell, it is clear that Farrell does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. Thus, amended claims 2 and 44 recite a feature that is not in the Farrell brush head and provides advantages over the Farrell brush head.

U.S. patent 5,560,070 (Reaume), which was asserted to teach generally a loop structure, also does not show positioning the fold line or loops opposite the attachment end of the brush head as recited in amended independent claims 2 and 44. Rather, it shows each bristle being attached to the next on its lateral periphery, which (if anything) impedes flowerability.

U.S. Patent No. 4,987,634 (Wiehrauch), U.S. Patent No. 5,630,243 (Federico), U.S. Patent No. 4,755,421 (Manning), U.S. Patent No. 4,031,673 (Hagelberg) and U.S. Patent No. 6,368,003 (Sorrell) also fail to make up the deficiencies of Jones, Beagle, Strader, Trenz, Farrell and Reaume.

Conclusion

In view of the above submission, amendment and remarks, reconsideration is respectfully requested. There are now four additional independent claims. Please charge any extra independent claim fees, plus any other needed fees to Deposit Account 17-0055 (believed to be \$800 plus any IDS fees).

Respectfully submitted,

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